

The Latter-Day Saints

MILLENNIAL STAR.

HE THAT HATH AN EAR, LET HIM HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAYETH
UNTO THE CHURCHES.—Rev. ii. 7.

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NECESSITY OF A LIVING PROPHET.

One of the distinguishing doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, is, that a Prophet is necessary to stand at the head of the Church to lead and guide it. It is well known that this doctrine comes in contact with the teachings of the greater part of Christendom. The faith of modern Christians is not in Prophets or Apostles, that is, in living Prophets or Apostles. All Christians profess to reverence the Prophets and Apostles who lived in ages long since past. Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Peter, and Paul, are all believed in most faithfully. The most gifted divines of Christendom weekly and daily point the multitudes to the ancient Prophets, and enjoin their teachings upon the people. The Gospels, Epistles, and Prophecies, declared and written by the ancient Prophets, who spoke and wrote as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost, are read and commented on with all diligence throughout Christian nations. The tombs of those Prophets are garnished, or they would be if known. Magnificent churches, chapels, and colleges are reared on every hand to the memory of those ancients who are renowned for having possessed the testimony of Jesus—the spirit of prophecy. It is a shame, in a Christian land, not to profess some kind of faith in the divine mission of the dead Prophets. It is scarcely considered respectable to throw discredit on those ancient worthies, or to speak irreverently of them. The man that does so is scouted from Christian society, branded as an infidel, shunned as a serpent, and piously

consigned to those scorching regions where the thermometer rises to an unnameable height.

A common proverb says—"a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." Scripture says—"a living dog is better than a dead lion." And I would humbly ask—Does it ever occur to the pious, devoted Christians of modern times, that one Prophet living in our midst is worth two dead ancient Prophets? I apprehend the Christians of these times are far from applying proverb and Scripture after this fashion, for when one talks about God's having a living Prophet upon the earth, one is looked upon with a vacant, idiotic stare, then follow sneers, scoffs, and sage warnings of delusion, imposture, fanaticism. "A living Prophet in this enlightened Gospel age! Oh most horrible blasphemy, most awful presumption!" and many kindred interjections burst from pious lips, just as though a Prophet never did live—never had a being—never walked upon God Almighty's earth—never existed anywhere, except in the mystical regions of imagination, like the redoubtable heroes of heathen mythology. A real live Prophet? Impossible! but if possible, and really so, a wonderful curiosity, (there was a wonder in heaven—that was nothing to the wonder of a living Prophet now upon the earth,) such a curiosity ought to be heralded through the world, by Barnum, then carefully stowed away in the British Museum, and secured by a lock that would keep Hobbs outside. Reader, pardon

apparent levity, but such is the inconsistency of Christendom. Doubtless you can call to your recollection manifestations of this inconsistency, but, if you can, just take the trouble to tell the nearest church or chapel-minister that God has a Prophet now living on the earth—do this, and twenty to one but you will learn something of the matter.

If a man, for disbelieving in dead Prophets, is called an infidel, by what term shall we designate those who disbelieve in a living Prophet? Something worse than infidel, certainly. There is, generally, an air of mystery, more or less dense, surrounding the teachings of ancient writers, which forms a shadow of excuse for disbelief in ancient Prophets, but no such excuse can be urged on behalf of disbelief in a living Prophet. When a character or object is present with us, we can discern its features distinctly, but in proportion as it recedes from us, does that distinctiveness of feature vanish, therefore we are more able to appreciate an object when near than when distant. Again, should a misunderstanding occur, we can ask an explanation from a living Prophet, but from a dead Prophet we never think of asking explanations, therefore as a disbelief in Prophets is censurable, and displeasing to God, a disbelief in a living Prophet must be by far a greater sin than a disbelief in dead Prophets. And further, the man who disbelieves in dead Prophets does them no personal injury, for they are beyond his power, but the man who disbelieves in a living Prophet, very frequently does him considerable personal injury by misrepresentation, slander, and physical abuse, therefore the disbeliever in a living Prophet, has the worst position in this particular. So the Christian should examine himself, and see whether he is in the faith of a living Prophet, before that Christian condemns, as an infidel, another man, for disbelieving in dead Prophets. Paradoxically the Christian may find himself more of an infidel, than is the man whom he wishes to designate by that title.

It is no new thing for a living Prophet to be discredited, despised, and rejected of men, and most by those men who profess to revere dead Prophets. Abraham, Moses, David, Jesus, Peter, Paul, and Joseph Smith, were successively disbelieved in while living, and Brigham Young is disbelieved in now, and principally by those who professed and profess to be the servants of

God. Who disbelieved in Jesus while living? Those who professed the strictest faith in Moses and the old Prophets. Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed on him?" asked the self-righteous Pharisees of the officers, who were sent to secure the person of Jesus, but who were fascinated by the wisdom of his teaching. Said Jesus at one time—"O Jerusalem, which killest the Prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee," &c. Now, reader, you know, well enough, that in Jerusalem lived the most pious professors and doctors of the Jewish religion, and that these very professors and doctors were much more infidel in their opinions of the divine mission of Jesus, than the common people were. The character which Jesus gives of these learned and devoted rabbis, is by no means flattering, but very forcible, and may exactly suit certain characters in our day—"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the Prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the Prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the Prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" Now it may appear strange to many, but it is manifest, from the above passages, that amongst the greatest and most detested enemies of God and His servants, are those who reverence dead Prophets, preach up their teachings, garnish the sepulchres of those Prophets, and build fine churches and chapels to their memory, yet deny that themselves have any need of a living Prophet. It has ever been the case, where Satan has had power amongst the children of men; and whilst man is subject to the influences of the evil one, it ever will be the case. It was the case with the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the religious professors of modern times. Joseph had no greater or more unrelenting persecutors than those who made a profession in dead Prophets. It is the case now with Brigham Young—who has no greater enemies than religious teachers, and among his greatest enemies may be named some who profess to revere the teachings of the dead Joseph. So ready is the human mind to dishonour a

living Prophet, and at the same time to profess to honour dead Prophets. Now there must be some cause for this apparent phenomenon. It appears strange indeed that men should honour certain characters who have long passed from this stage of action, and should, at the same time, despise and persecute a similar character who lives in their midst! What a marvellous perversity! How can the matter be explained? Very readily. It all springs from the truth of the proposition this article started with—the necessity of a living Prophet. Those teachings of dead Prophets which will apply to subsequent generations, should be prized and acted upon by subsequent generations. If this is not the case, a degree of condemnation will follow. But the greatest condemnation that can fall upon a people follows the rejection of living Prophets. Why? Because those Prophets are commissioned by the Almighty to go directly to that people, with a particular revelation of His will to them—a revelation which, very likely, will only apply incidentally to future generations. Now, if those Prophets be rejected by the very people to whom they are sent, what will the most pious professions of faith in dead Prophets avail? Nothing. Those professions will be a solemn mockery before God. Such a course would add to the condemnation of any people. A living Prophet would be moved to rebuke them, as our Saviour rebuked the Scribes and Pharisees. Of what avail was it for the antediluvians to profess a faith in Adam, Abel, or Enoch, while, at the same time, the kiss of derision, and the finger of scorn, were directed towards Noah, the living Prophet? Did faith in dead Prophets then avail? Not a jot. If the Ninevites had rejected Jonah, and professed faith in Noah, and Moses, what would have been the result? The destruction of Nineveh within the forty days. No people ever made greater professions of faith in dead Prophets, than the Jews did in the days of Jesus and the Apostles; yet did those very Jews reject living Prophets in the persons of our Lord and his disciples! What are the reverential professions of the Jews avail? Let the raising of the Temple of God, the destruction of Jerusalem, the dispersion of the Jews, their broken, cursed, and deplorable condition through a dreary night of seventeen centuries, be a sufficient answer. The an-

cient Lamanites and Nephties, built up churches to themselves, and professed to follow Christ, while they rejected the teachings of the living Prophet, Nephi and Mormon. What was the consequence? Let the filthy, degraded, wretched condition of the American Indians suffice for a reply. And in these days men—pious men—professed followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, have rejected the Prophet Joseph, have persecuted him unto the death; now his innocent blood crimson the land that is foremost in professions of Christian liberty. Will these empty professions avert the wrath of an indignant God? Will not the people be visited by the Almighty for such things? Verily the most pious reverence for all the ancient Prophets will not atone for the innocent blood of one modern Prophet. Will those who reject the Prophet Brigham be justified in the sight of God by solemn professions of faith in Joseph? If they do, God will not prove Himself the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. And should Brigham be taken away, will any one be accounted righteous before God, for rejecting future Prophets, though it is done under a profession of faith in Brigham? Let such beware, for the Almighty expects His living Prophet to be respected and listened to first. The Lord knows full well that if living Prophets are respected, dead ones will be. But if living Prophets are despised, how can true respect be paid to dead ones? Reverence for dead Prophets is a pious farce, when accompanied by contempt for living Prophets.

It is folly for any people to follow all the teachings of dead Prophets, for many of their teachings will not apply to generations who exist after those Prophets are dead. Many of the teachings of the Prophet of God, are local and suited for a particular place and people, and particular circumstances, and not designed for universal application. For another people to apply to themselves such particular teachings, would be gross perversion, and evidence of great ignorance or wickedness. If any people were to build an ark because Noah did, what should we think of them? We should almost doubt their sanity. How foolish it would be for modern Egyptians to migrate to Palestine because the Israelites did! Equally unwise would it be for modern Christians to flee to the moun-

talms of Judea, because Jesus instructed his disciples to do so at a certain time; or for Christians to sell all that they possess, and have all things common, because the primitive disciples did so. Who would now think of selling his garment, and buying a sword with the proceeds, because the Apostles were instructed so to do? Would it not be nonsense for a man who despises Brigham, and professes to regard the words of Joseph, to go to Kirtland or Nauvoo to build a Temple, because Joseph instructed the Saints to

gather there, and build Temples? Most certainly it would. Yet into such ludicrous dilemmas those persons who reject a living Prophet, and profess faith in dead ones, are unavoidably led. Men of this description reject the living Spirit that inspires a living Prophet, and gives life to all his teachings; and, instead thereof, follow the dead letter of those Prophets who have long bid adieu to their ministry on earth. Yet it is a well known Scripture maxim, that the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.

(To be continued.)

TESTIMONY OF A VENERABLE DISCIPLE.

Elder T. B. H. Stenhouse has courteously favoured us with the following translation of a letter addressed to him during his late visit to this country, by a venerable "son in the Gospel." The Saints will no doubt be gratified by the perusal of the testimony of one who passed eighty winters before he found what he had long and anxiously sought—the Truth—the Gospel of Jesus—the Pearl of Great Price. We trust our aged brother may live to see the courts of the Zion of the Lord, and inquire within His holy Temple.—Ep.

Genève.

Dear and Beloved Brother—As you authorised me to write you, I hasten to embrace the present opportunity as a child who loves his father—it is exactly my case. I am going to try and lisp, or chatter like a new-born—twenty-two days old! I commend myself to your indulgent goodness.

Your compulsory absence has not permitted you to receive my testimony, which I have borne several times in our "ré-unions". I reiterate therefore what I have previously declared. After having received baptism, and the imposition of hands, I have experienced within me a regeneration before unknown—peace, accompanied with joy, which has nothing of an earthly nature; something exclusively spiritual, accompanied with a determination to conform to the Gospel, my thoughts, my words, and my actions, believing that the Spirit of God will approve my resolution, and direct and aid me to the accomplishment of my desire.

From the age of five years, I have read and re-read the Bible, and frequented religious assemblies, both in my own country and in Germany, but more particularly here

during fifteen years. In truth, I have heard fine and fervent prayers, and edifying sermons, but they always left a void—something to make me see that I ought to direct my thoughts to find that which I failed to obtain. Our learned theologians—preachers the most celebrated, after having placed me upon the good road, always left me half-way, so that I returned home as advanced as when I went out.

It is truly astonishing that, at the age of eighty years and nine months, by the grace of the Lord, I have received that which I have sought. And I pray to Him daily, that I may grow in the knowledge and the grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The hour for the post is near, receive the assurance that we pray always for you, that the Lord may preserve you safely, and shower upon you His most precious blessings. We hope to see you soon again in perfect health in the midst of your children. Accept our warmest salutations.

LOUIS COURVOISIER.

President T. B. H. Stenhouse.

He that would make a real progress in knowledge, must dedicate his age as well as his youth—the latter growth as well as the first fruits, at the altar of truth.

THE MORMONS—THE MAHOMETANS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

(From the New York Herald.)

Philosophers tell us that the grand law of human progression does not hold good in respect of moral and metaphysical science. If this be true—and we see no reason to doubt it—if, while we may safely consider the steam engine, the printing press, the loom, and the telegraph, to be the imperishable and inalienable property of man, we have no guarantee for the stability of our religious creeds and schools of ethics—if our descendants may be found more gross and earthly in their passions, more debased in their feelings and desires, than we are—the birth and infancy of new religious doctrines and strange sects deserve a peculiarly careful notice at our hands. At a time when a devout Abbe confesses, with deep sorrow, that Christianity can no longer keep pace with the intellectual progress of the world; and a mitred orator is heard to declare his conviction of the inadequacy of the Protestant doctrine to satisfy the popular craving for mental food; when the converts made by countless missionaries abroad are two few to supply the void created by desertions at home—we may be permitted, perhaps, for argument's sake, to suppose for a moment that the present forms of Christianity will pass away, and to ask the appalling question—What religion is to succeed them? At what shrine will posterity kneel? Some worship of a higher Being is an imperative want in the human heart—some source of morality, nobler than a mere penal code, is absolutely indispensable to cement the elements of society. Among the new schools of religion which are springing up around us, is there any which can absorb Protestant and Catholic, Unitarian and Freethinker, and substitute a new faith for future ages?

We leave speculative philosophy to suggest a reply. But we cannot refrain from making a few brief remarks on the growth and prospects of the most remarkable of the many religious factions which have come to light in this country.

While to the thoughtless reader, the name of Mormonism is only suggestive of ribald epigrams on the continency of Mr. Brigham Young, and the existence of the sect is treated as a mere joke; the

eyes of thinking men are fixed on the young settlement of Deseret, with apprehensions of no common magnitude. The colony of Salt Lake is no assemblage of half-brained socialists, or Agapemones of rogues and dupes—a haunt of hypocrisy and beastly licentiousness; Brigham Young and his followers are neither idle knaves nor corrupt profligates. *The stumbling-blocks which have led to the downfall of so many false sects, have been avoided by the Mormons.* Their religious code is imbued with enough mysticism to attract the imaginative; but it is linked and coupled with a moral law framed on the wisest basis.

"We believe," say the Mormons, "in being honest, true, chaste, temperate, benevolent, virtuous, and upright, and in doing good to all men; indeed, we may say that we follow the admonition of Paul; 'We believe all things, we hope all things, we have endured very many things, and hope to be able to endure all things. Every thing lovely, virtuous, praiseworthy, and of good report, we seek after, looking forward to the recompense of reward.' But an idle or lazy person cannot be a Christian, neither have salvation; he is a drone, and deserves to be stung to death, and tumbled out of the hive."

Despite all the calumnious tales which have been circulated, we have every reason to believe that the Mormons are just in their dealings, and kind and charitable both to strangers and to each other. Polygamy, it is true, is practised among them, and has been severely used as a weapon in the hands of their assailants. But so far from being made subservient to depraved passions, it is only tolerated in order to increase the number of the faithful, and on the principle quoted above, that drones—whether male or female—must be driven from the hive. Female chastity and conjugal fidelity are essential virtues; adultery and illicit intercourse will be punished with death by the Mormon code. Both honour and religion oblige the man whose wife, daughter, or sister, has been injured, to kill the seducer.

It would be foreign to our purpose to attempt to analyse their religious belief.

It is an eclectic compound of Christianity, Platonism, Brahminism, Mahometanism, and that new spiritual philosophy, which, under various names, is captivating the superstitious minds of the nineteenth century. It is peculiarly calculated to satisfy the aspirations of those who feel a void in their hearts, which Christianity cannot fill. Like all successful sects, the political domination of the Mormons is a pure despotism, the President, or Chief Priest, holding undisputed sway over the property and persons of his subjects. But according to the testimony of an apparently trustworthy writer, "There is not (among the Mormons) the usual man-worship found in the admirers of splendid abilities and achievements of the founders of religious sects"—each man watches, with an eagle eye, that first principles are adhered to, and stands ready to proclaim apostasy in chief or layman—and there seems to be as fair a sample of intelligence, moral probity, and good citizenship (among them), as can be found in any Christian community.

Whether Joseph Smith did or did not deal in imposture, a sect established on such principles as these, and which, after a struggling existence of twenty years, counts its votaries by hundreds of thousands, is entitled to something more than sarcasm and contemptuous sneers. These but add fuel to the heat of the acolytes' persecution oracles their energies, and strengthen their convictions. While we look on with indifference, thousands in Europe and America are silently enrolling themselves under the banner of Mormonism. Where is this to end? All religions, which have been at the same time civil politics, have been the work of a single individual, and have presumed in their origin, insignificance and ridiculous. Abraham was the inspired founder of a sect which was destined to become immortal, and to practise usury and sell slaves throughout all generations. For many centuries it was but a sect, which fought long against the slavery of the East, they purchased violence with their blood, little did Zoroaster think when he taught his disciples to wear robes of his white faith, that robes would one day bear him to be a prophet, and that his creed would become the dominant religion of the empire. Theosus and Zoroaster taught religions which were also politics; how poor were

their beginnings, how disheartening the scorn of their neighbours? Yet each in turn threatened to subjugate the world. Who has not heard of or stood in the damp vaults of the catacombs? where the trembling few, who constituted the elect Christian church, used to meet and pray that they might be permitted to practise with impunity a novel, harmless, moral form of worship, which was destined to fill the universe! Thus it has been with all. Cradled in martyrdom—physical or moral, according to the age and forms of belief have grown to puberty, and in the plenitude of their strength have defied the sceptre of time. They are all gone but the towering Church of Christ. None was better, perchance, than the other—the chief merit of each successive creed was its fitness for the times.

How singular, how teeming with food for speculation, the contrast between Mahomet and Joseph Smith! Both were men of indomitable energy, vivid imagination, and extraordinary power over the masses. Both believed a great portion of what they taught, but did not scruple to varnish their tale with flights of fancy. Both date their mission from a vision from heaven—the command was given to both by a messenger from God. Neither attempted to uproot or destroy, but to renovate. Pristine simplicity was the avowed aim of both; Islamism was an attempt to restore the days of Moses and Elias. Mormonism looks to the early ages of the Church as a model. Both Mahomet and Smith sacrifice the social happiness of the female sex to the interest of the state, by tolerating polygamy. The machinery of both religions requires the intervention of supernatural beings—genii in the one, angels and Seara in the other. Both appeal as well to the senses as to the moral preceptions—the pleasures of conviviality and wholesome amusements are indicated by both creeds. The Koran and the Book of Mormon, acknowledge alike, one God, supreme, infinite, and from the name of the deity that of his prophet is inseparable in prayer in both. Many points of resemblance can be found in the words of Mahomet, and the articles of Mormon belief. Both look forward to a millennium on earth, where peace, plenty, and truth shall reign. Both expect a glorious resurrection, in which all bodies shall be raised incorruptible. Both anticipate the consummation

masses of territory. Mahomet and Smith
 were equally successful in raising the
 banner of the impassioned oratory which
 follow; Mahomet's adherents fly from
 Mecca; the Mormons are expelled from
 Jackson county. The Koran bids them
 resist by a league to have no communica-
 tion with the new sect; the Presbyterians
 and Methodists declare that no reliance
 can be placed on contracts entered into
 by Mormons. Dissensions break out in
 both camps; Smith is not a whit less en-
 tergetic than Mahomet in repelling them,
 and establishing the supreme control.
 Driven from Mecca to Taye, thence back
 to Mecca; and again forced to fly to
 Medina, Mahomet staked his life on the
 success of his cause. The Mormons—
 men, women and children—are brutally
 hunted out of Zion in mid winter—boys
 of nine years of age are murdered in cold
 blood—defenseless men are trod under
 foot till their bowels gashed forth; the
 wearied exiles, hardly obtaining from their
 persecutors time to complete the idol of
 their hearts—their temple, are banished
 from Nauvoo, and the merciless animosity
 of fanaticism is now close on their tracks
 in the distant Valley of Salt Lake.

Here the parallel falls. Mahomet,
 driven to desperation, unites his little
 band of followers at Medina, makes a po-
 litical question of his creed, and after de-
 feating a thousand men, with a small force,
 barely exceeding a hundred, resolves to
 propagate Islamism by the sword, con-
 quers invincible Arabia in nine years, and
 dies, leaving behind him half a continent
 of proselytes. Joseph Smith, at a time
 when his martyrdom did more for his
 cause than the most brilliant feats of pro-
 wess, is savagely murdered at Carthage.

He leaves behind him a devoted band of
 adherents, linked to the faith by their ad-
 ration of his memory, and sworn to avenge
 him. His successor possesses all the qual-
 ities which were wanting in Smith—erud-
 ition, foresight, random policy. Mor-
 monism has ceased to be a mere question
 of religious doctrine, its unparalleled
 growth, its novel polity, its attractive
 party has already drawn the anxious eyes of
 statesmen upon the Utah question. Men
 have not been wanting to advocate the
 entire extermination of the sect, and ex-
 perience is rife with attempts of similar
 acts of fanaticism. Should the three-
 fourths of the world who would crucify Mor-
 monism obtain the preponderance in
 our national councils (which God forbid,)
 the most desperate valor would be found
 among the persecuted race, every spur
 which can goad man to heroism—the
 love of country, of religion, of liberty, the
 voice of natural affection, and the su-
 pernatural influence of a belief in a divine
 mission—would unite to render their ar-
 mies invincible. On the other side, mean
 envy and cowardly persecution are not
 likely to inspire deeds of daring.

We forbear to speculate on the prob-
 able result. Once already, in times long
 gone by, the banners of Christianity and
 Islamism were unfurled in hostile array,
 and the faith of the world depended on a
 successful charge. Had the progress of
 Charles Martel forsaken him on the plains
 of Tours, the conqueror, Abderame, would
 have overrun Europe, and mosques might
 now have stood wherever the spires of
 Christian churches point to realms above.
 "History," says the philosopher, "con-
 stantly repeats itself; but each successive
 revolution is the birth of a new era."

MAHOMETANISM AND MORMONISM.

We are not aware of any impurity in the
 law of Mahomet; on the contrary, it is par-
 ticularly strict and temperate; it forbids
 even the use of wine, music, and dancing,
 and all manner of licentiousness. Per-
 haps our correspondent's mind is dwelling
 exclusively on its polygamic indulgence;
 but if polygamy be sufficient to blast its
 reputation for temperance, in spite of all its
 other specifications, it must have an equal
 effect on the law of Moses. Indeed, the

law of Mahomet is more strict in respect to
 marriage than the law of Moses. But
 though polygamy be adapted to an inferior
 stage of civilization, namely, barbarism, it
 should not be forgotten that it has the
 effect of preserving society, to a consid-
 erable extent, from one of the gravest and
 foulest peccadilloes of Christian civiliza-
 tion. We are not aware that any Chris-
 tian authority, human or divine, has ever
 said that Mahometans should not marry

everlasting life. The Scriptures say that, in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him; and they also say, that there is no name in heaven or on earth by which we can be saved but that of Christ. But they give us no authority to deny the truth of the first of these passages, and twist the other into an ungenerous meaning. The Mahometans are a much purer people than the Jews ever were.

A. LYMAN, GEORGE S., and FORGET-ME-NOT, all treat of Mormon Polygamy. The first two justify it by quoting the Patriarchs and the Sweet Singer of Israel, the man after God's own heart; and they say, that surely such men could never have been so highly favoured if the practice were absolutely immoral. FORGET-ME-NOT is a lady, and is deeply concerned at the immorality of the practice, and apparently fearful of its making progress, if not checked by Scriptural argument; so she labours hard to make the Scriptures condemn it. But it is not a Scriptural

question at all, any more than slavery; and if we are to be guided by Scripture in these matters, both slave-owners and Mormon polygamists will have the advantage. There is no more danger of going back into slavery and polygamy, because the Patriarchs practised them, than there is of returning to bestial sacrifices for a similar reason. FORGET-ME-NOT may rest content upon the subject, and suffer the Mormon arguments to fly over her head, like the idle wind that she regards not. But we advise her not to attempt to force the Bible to speak a language which it does not speak; this is not candid. We have looked at her clear passage (Malachi ii, and 16.), but it has no reference whatever to polygamy. It has been supposed that polygamy is forbidden in the 2nd verse of the 7th chapter of the 1st Corinthians; but it is doubtful. The law, however, of Christendom forbids it, and the law of nature forbids it, except in exceptional circumstances, for the sexes are nearly equal in number. — *Family Herald*.

The Latter-day Saints' Millennium Star.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 13, 1853.

COVENANTS—A WORD OF COUNSEL.—The Lord has opened up this great and last dispensation by restoring the Everlasting Covenant to man, and covenant-making is one prominent feature of the plan of salvation. All covenants have their obligations, and the faithful discharge of those obligations brings certain blessings and rewards. But on the other hand, when covenants are violated, and their obligations dishonoured, penalties, equal in magnitude with the nature and importance of the covenants that are broken, are incurred.

The blessings of salvation are received by virtue of covenant. When men covenant to keep the commandments of God, He gives them of His Spirit; and in keeping the obligations of that covenant, by receiving the ordinances, a relationship of the most exalted character is formed. If the individual honours that relationship so as to obtain the blessings of his covenant, the Lord soon reveals greater blessings and privileges, which the individual can enjoy in the family by coming under the obligations of another covenant equal in importance with the honours and favours to be enjoyed; neither does the principle stop here, but covenant succeeds covenant, until man, through his faithfulness to them, becomes one with the Son of God—a joint-heir to the Father's inheritance. Now this is a great honour, to become a lawful heir to the kingdoms, dominions, glory, and power of the Father. It is not attained to in a day, a month, nor a year, neither is this short life sufficient to possess all things, but the right of them may be secured by keeping all the covenants of the holy Priesthood, and they are many. There is also a penalty attached to all covenants, and as mercy and rewards are obtained by sacredly keeping them, so justice and punishment are as surely meted out to the transgressor. The punishment attached to the

breaking of our first covenants is the withdrawal of the Spirit of God. The violation of other covenants would be punishable with immediate death and destruction in this world, but leaving power to come forth in the first resurrection. Others of still greater magnitude, if broken, would doom the transgressor to ruin, both in this world and in the world to come; while others again are of that magnitude, that, if broken, there is no redemption, but the transgressors of such covenants become angels to the Devil, and they cannot come where God and Christ dwell, *worlds* without end.

To have to do with covenants which in anywise involve our eternal destiny, is a matter of no small moment. The covenants and obligations of the holy Priesthood are eternal in their consequences, and, when entered into with God, and recognized by Him, they are not only made by virtue of an eternal principle, but they are made with an Eternal Being.

There are other covenants administered by this Priesthood, in which man is recognized as the higher power, while in those already referred to, he is the lesser or dependent one. The most important perhaps of all these is the marriage covenant.

As we do not here purpose to discuss the nature of that covenant, suffice it to say, that it is, in principle, precisely similar to those made with higher beings. The great object of covenanting with the Lord Jesus Christ, is to become one with him, that each may enjoy all the blessings, privileges, glory, honour, and power, which either may be capable of imparting or receiving. The union of the sexes, by virtue of the marriage covenant, is for the same object and purpose, and entitles each to all the blessings, glory, dominion, and power, which can spring from the other, or which can grow out of the union. By virtue of this, they *two* become one. Both of these covenants are equally applicable to all beings; and all who are capable of honouring them, should enter into them, and receive their blessings, or they cannot attain to a fulness of glory. Otherwise it would be in vain that these covenants were ever ordained for the use of man.

Now it is because of the folly of many, that we write concerning the marriage covenant. There are those who profess to be Saints, and even Elders (though we speak it in their shame,) who have families, and who will go about making covenants, privately, with young women, which they have no right to make, and know not that they will ever be able to keep. This course is not only directly opposed to the regulations and restrictions of the laws pertaining to the marriage covenant, but exhibits a degree of folly which is the fruits of profound ignorance, or a great degree of wickedness. Such men who would venture upon the privileges and blessings of such a covenant, without permission from God who ordained it, through his servant holding the keys thereof upon the earth, would forfeit all claim to its rights, and inherit a curse. When covenants are made, covenants are created, and these obligations must be fulfilled, or condemnation and punishment is incurred. When covenants are made at a time, and under circumstances, when the blessings of those covenants cannot be enjoyed, the Devil takes the advantage of this unwise position, and oftentimes makes those unlawful obligations the very means of a man's destruction. In this way many have fallen victims to their own unbridled conduct.

When men place so small an estimate upon the marriage covenant, as to enter into making covenants with women when and where no benefits can arise from them, and when they are ignorant of whether they would ever be permitted to keep them, we would advise them, as those who would be the first to disavow such covenants. And we would advise all good women, both old and young, to be careful

how they become ensnared by such characters. Those who will thus trifle with sacred things, and indulge in trespassing beyond the limits of their right, in making covenants, will find those covenants not only a source of trouble, but in most cases they will result in lasting shame and reproach. How often we hear of the ruin of both men and women, who have perhaps innocently ventured to tread upon the grounds of covenant-making, and who have proven it to be but the first step to their future misery—grounds upon which they were unauthorized to tread, hence they could not divine the consequences.

It is supposed, by many, that some Elders who are travelling in the ministry, are entitled to some wonderful privileges, because they have come from Zion; but we will here admit that our ignorance is so great, that we do not know of one in the British Isles, who, having a wife living, is privileged by the law of God to make a marriage covenant, in public or in private, with any other woman; and we hope none of the sisters will feel bad because such is the case. It is very common for men in England to have wives who cannot agree to live with them, but even in such cases, men are not authorized to make contracts of marriage with other women, before a lawful divorce is obtained.

We would say, therefore, to all such men of families, cease your covenant-making with women, which can in any wise have a bearing upon their future destiny, or yours; if you do not, you will lose the Spirit, and be brought to shame. This is particularly applicable to Elders, and if given heed to, they will not get into such a tremendous hurry to go to Zion, just because they think they can get another wife there. Some men with lustful desires suffer their affections to be weaned from their companions, and sacrifice a family, which they ought to cherish as their own lives, to follow their depraved appetites, which are leading them down to Hell; and all is done under the cloak of *religious liberty*, while some women are so weak as to follow such Elders, and feed their appetites.

The Lord has most strictly guarded the relationship of the sexes, and He will not suffer such things to be trifled with, therefore He has said that whoso looketh upon a woman to lust after her, shall lose the Spirit, and if he does not repent shall deny the faith. What could be more jealously protected, when, without any outward commission of crime, which the law could recognize, a man is liable to an apostate's doom! This is a punishment which the Lord has decreed shall come upon those who thus trifle with the affections and desires of the human soul. No one need go into the dark to do his deeds of wickedness, and say "no eye seeth me," nor make his unlawful covenants in secret, and say, "no one knoweth it," for this decree of the Almighty will reach all such cases, and such persons may be sure their sins will find them out, when the Spirit has forsaken them, and they are left withered branches—exhibitions of God's displeasure.

Every soul should govern and control the affections, energies, and powers with which it is endowed. It is the use we make of the abilities and faculties which God has given us, that determines our worthiness in his sight. We are mainly prompted by our affections—they are a wonderful stimulus to all our actions. If the affections are fully controlled, every motive and desire which springs from the exercise of them, will be pure and holy; but if the affections are suffered to run out headlessly, and are lavished upon every thing that may appear pleasing or desirable, the judgment will be overcome, and reason itself will finally be brought in subjection to uncontrolled passions.

The love and affections of the soul should be placed upon those things which are eternal, and from which they need never be broken off. When this is done,

the affections can be developed and matured, without fear of being destroyed; and hopes of happiness can ripen into joys unspeakable. When the affections are destroyed, hopes are blasted, and the soul writhes under the agony of disappointment, until, not infrequently, relief is found in a premature death. The experience of many a fond heart, purely innocent, yet betrayed, and the dictates of wisdom, would say, Love what God loves, admire what God admires, and honour what God honours. But when woman so far draws upon the fountain of her soul, as to voluntarily give her eternal interests and destiny into the hands of any man, let it be to one who is responsible, and one who will so far requite her love, as to protect her interests at the sacrifice of his life. Jesus laid down his life to save the family which was given to him to exalt, and men should not take upon themselves the responsibility of the salvation of others, with any other expectation but to do as he has done. If men who held the Priesthood of God, duly appreciated their position, we think they would not require to be cautioned about making covenants, and if women appreciated their dependence upon man, they would be more careful upon whom they placed it.

HOME CORRESPONDENCE.—*Birmingham Conference*—Birmingham, July 15, Elder A. Marchant writes. A good spirit was prevailing, the gifts of the Spirit were much enjoyed, particularly in healings. The meetings were well attended, and a great spirit of inquiry respecting the Patriarchal order of marriage, was manifested. Tract distributing was being vigorously carried on by the Saints.

Wales—Methy, Tydfil, July 23rd, Elder W. S. Phillips writes. He had been visiting the Conferences in North Wales, and held a Special General Conference, for the Conferences in that region, at Llanrwst, Denbighshire, on the 4th, and had had an excellent time. Prospects seemed better than ever. There being many Methodists in that region, much opposition was met with in spreading the truth, in some towns the Elders being often pelted and driven. In the western and southern Conferences, appearances were cheering; many persons were believing.

London, Kent, Reading, and Essex Conferences—London, July 23rd, Elder B. Brown writes. The work in these Conferences was moving on briskly, the Saints were increasing in faith, and in the gifts of the Spirit. Many influential persons were investigating the work.

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE.—*Malta*—July 7th, Elder J. F. Bell informs us of the safe arrival of Elder T. O'bray, and sister Bell, at Malta, June 30th.

Germany—Hamburg, July 21st, Elder D. Carn writes. The work was moving steadily along in the midst of many difficulties. The Baptists had published two pamphlets against "Mormonism." The doctrine of Celestial Marriage was making matters quite interesting.

A WORD TO THE WISE.—Read the article extracted from the *New York Herald*. The writer speaks more justly of the "Mormons" than most public teachers do, especially Christian divines. We apprehend that many high and mighty persons will yet look on the rising star of Deseret, with anxious forebodings; yet, if the Saints are faithful, the fear of the Lord shall rest upon the nations, and they shall honour Zion, and say, "Surely Zion is the city of our God, and surely Zion cannot fall, neither be moved out of her place, for God is there, and the hand of the Lord is there, and He hath sworn by the power of His might, to be her salvation, and her high tower." Let the Saints rejoice, all is well, Israel must be the head, and not the tail.

The paragraphs from the *Family Herald* are interesting in their way.

Fac-simile of Characters from the plates of the Book of Mormon.

(From the Prophet.)

THE FOLLOWING IS A CORRECT COPY OF THE CHARACTERS TAKEN FROM THE PLATES THE BOOK OF MORMON WAS TRANSLATED FROM; THE SAME THAT WERE TAKEN TO PROFESSOR MITCHELL, AND AFTERWARDS TO PROFESSOR ANTHON, OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, BY MARTIN HARRIS, IN THE YEAR 1827, IN FULFILLMENT OF ISAIAH XXIX. 11, 12:—"THE VISION OF ALL IS BECOME UNTO YOU AS THE WORDS OF A BOOK THAT IS SEALED, WHICH MEN DELIVER TO ONE THAT IS LEARNED, SAYING, READ THIS I PRAY THEE; AND HE SAITH, I CANNOT, FOR IT IS SEALED: AND THE BOOK IS DELIVERED TO ONE THAT IS NOT LEARNED, SAYING, READ THIS I PRAY THEE, AND HE SAITH I AM NOT LEARNED."

Handwritten character sequence 1: A series of stylized, cursive-like characters, including symbols resembling 'A', 'B', 'C', 'D', 'E', 'F', 'G', 'H', 'I', 'J', 'K', 'L', 'M', 'N', 'O', 'P', 'Q', 'R', 'S', 'T', 'U', 'V', 'W', 'X', 'Y', 'Z', and various punctuation marks.

Handwritten character sequence 2: A second series of stylized, cursive-like characters, similar in style to the first sequence, representing a different set of characters or a continuation of the same set.

Handwritten character sequence 3: A third series of stylized, cursive-like characters, continuing the sequence of characters from the plates.

HISTORY OF JOSEPH SMITH.

(Continued from page 521.)

This day, received the following letter from brother William Smith—

Brother Joseph—Though I do not know but I have forfeited all right and title to the word brother, in consequence of what I have done, (for I consider, myself, that I am unworthy to be called one,) after coming to myself, and considering what I have done, I feel as though it was a duty to make an humble confession to you, for what I have done, or what took place the other evening; but leave this part of the subject at present. I was called to an account, by the Twelve, yesterday, for my conduct; or they desired to know my mind or determination, and what I was going to do. I told them that on reflection upon the many difficulties that I had had with the Church, and the much disgrace I had brought upon myself in consequence of these things, and also that my health would not permit me to go to school to make any preparations for the endowment, and that my health was such that I was not able to travel, that it would be better for them to appoint one, in the office, that would be better able to fill it, and by doing this they would throw me into the hands of the Church, and leave me where I was before I was chosen; then I would not be in a situation to bring so much disgrace upon the cause, when I fell into temptation; and perhaps, by this I might obtain salvation. You know my passions, and the danger of falling from so high a station; and thus by withdrawing from the office of the Apostleship, while there is salvation for me, and remaining a member in the Church—I feel afraid, if I don't do this, it will be worse for me some other day.

And again, my health is poor, and I am not able to travel, and it is necessary the office should not be idle. And again, I say you know my passions, and I am afraid it will be the worse for me by and by. Do so, if the Lord will have mercy on me, and let me remain as a member in the Church, and then I can travel and preach when I am able. Do not think I am your enemy for what I have done. Perhaps you may say or ask why I have not remembered the good that you have done to me. When I reflect upon the injury I have done you, I must confess that I do not know what I have been about. I feel sorry for what I have done, and humbly ask your forgiveness. I have not confidence as yet to come and see you, for I feel ashamed of what I have done; and as I feel

now, I feel as though all the confessions that I could make, verbally or by writing, would not be sufficient to atone for the transgression. Be this as it may, I am willing to make all the restitution you shall require. If I can stay in the Church as a member, I will try to make all the satisfaction possible.

Yours with respect,

WILLIAM SMITH.

Do not cast me off for what I have done, but strive to save me in the Church as a member. I do repent of what I have done to you, and ask your forgiveness. I consider the transgression, the other evening, of no small magnitude; but it is done, and I cannot help it now. I know, brother Joseph, you are always willing to forgive; but I sometimes think, when I reflect upon the many injuries I have done you, I feel as though confession was hardly sufficient. But have mercy on me this once, and I will try to do so no more.

The Twelve called a Council yesterday, and sent over after me, and I went over. This Council, remember, was called together by themselves, and not by me.

W. S.

To the foregoing I gave the following answer the same day—

Brother William—Having received your letter, I now proceed to answer it, and shall first proceed to give a brief narration of my feelings and motives since the night I first came to the knowledge of your having a debating school, which was at the time I happened in with Bishop Whitney, his father and mother, &c.; and from that time I took an interest in them, and was delighted with it, and formed a determination to attend the school, for the purpose of obtaining information, and with the idea of imparting the same, through the assistance of the Spirit of the Lord, if by any means I should have faith to do so. And with this intent, I went to the school on last Wednesday night, not with the idea of breaking up the school, neither did it enter into my heart that there was any wrangling or jealousies in your heart against me. Notwithstanding, previous to my leaving home, there were feelings of solemnity rolling across my breast, which were unaccountable to me; and also these feelings continued by spells to depress my spirits, and seemed to manifest that all was not right, even after the school commenced,

and during the debate, yet I strove to believe that all would work together for good. I was pleased with the power of the arguments that were used, and did not feel to cast any reflections upon any one that had spoken; but I felt it was the duty of old men that was as Presidents, to be as grave, at least, as young men; and that it was our duty to smile [not] at solid arguments and sound reasonings; and be impressed with solemnity, which should be manifest in our countenances, when folly and that which militates against truth and righteousness, rear their head.

Therefore, in the spirit of my calling, and in view of the authority of the Priesthood that has been conferred upon me, it would be my duty to reprove whatever I esteemed to be wrong, fondly hoping in my heart, that all parties would consider it right, and therefore humble themselves, that Satan might not take the advantage of us, and hinder the progress of our school.

Now, Brother William, I want you should bear with me, notwithstanding my plainness. I would say to you that my feelings were grieved at the interruption you made upon Elder McLellan. I thought you should have considered your relation with him in your Apostleship, and not manifest any division of sentiment between you and him, for a surrounding multitude to take the advantage of you; therefore, by way of entreaty, on the account of the anxiety I had for your influence and welfare, I said unto you, Do not have any feelings; or something to that amount. Why I am thus particular is that if you have misconstrued my feelings towards you, you may be corrected. But to proceed. After the school was closed, brother Hyrum requested the privilege of speaking; you objected; however, you said if he would not abuse the school he might speak, and that you would not allow any man to abuse the school in your house. Now you had no reason to suspect that Hyrum would abuse the school; therefore my feelings were mortified at these unnecessary observations. I undertook to reason with you, but you manifested an inconsiderate and stubborn spirit. I then despaired of benefitting you, on account of the spirit you manifested, which drew from me the expression that you was as ugly as the devil. Father then commanded silence, and I formed a determination to obey his mandate, and was about to leave the house, with the impression that you was under the influence of a wicked spirit; you replied that you would say what you pleased in your own house. Father said, Say what you please, but let the rest hold their tongues. Then a reflection rushed through my mind of the anxiety and care I have had for you and your family, in doing what I did in

finishing your house, and providing flour for your family, &c.; and also, father had possession in the house, as well as yourself; and when at any time have I transgressed the commandments of my father, or sold my birthright, that I should not have the privilege of speaking in my father's house, or in other words, in my father's family, or in your house, (for so we will call it, and so it shall be), that I should not have the privilege of reproofing a younger brother? Therefore I said, I will speak for I built the house, and it is as much mine as yours; or something to that effect. I should have said, that I helped to finish the house. I said it merely to show that it could not be the right spirit that would rise up for trifling matters, and undertake to put me to silence. I saw that your indignation was kindled against me, and you made towards me. I was not then to be moved, and I thought to pull off my loose coat, lest it should tangle me, and you be left to hurt me, but not with the intention of hurting you. But you were too soon for me, and having once fallen into the hands of a mob and been wounded in my side, and now into the hands of a brother, my side gave way. And after having been rescued from your grasp, I left your house with feelings indescribable—the scenery had changed and all those expectations that I had cherished, when going to your house, and brotherly kindness, charity, forbearance, and natural affection, that in duty binds us not to make each other offenders for a word. But alas! abuse, anger, malice, hatred, and rage, with a lame side, with marks of violence heaped upon me by a brother, were the reflections of my disappointment; and with these I returned home, not able to sit down or rise up without help; but, through the blessing of God, I am now better.

I received your letter, and perused it with care. I have not entertained a feeling of malice against you. I am older than you, and have endured more suffering, having been marred by mobs. The labours of my calling, a series of persecutions and injuries continually heaped upon me—all serve to debilitate my body; and it may be that I cannot boast of being stronger than you. If I could or could not, would this be an honour or dishonour to me? If I could boast like David, of slaying a Goliath, who defied the armies of the living God; or like Paul, of contending with Peter, face to face, with sound arguments, it might be an honour, but to mangle the flesh, or seek revenge upon one who never did you any wrong, cannot be a source of sweet reflection to you nor to me, neither to an honourable father and mother, brothers and sisters. And when we reflect with what care, and with

what unremitting diligence our parents have striven to watch over us, and how many hours of sorrow and anxiety they have spent over our cradles and bed-sides, in times of sickness; how careful we ought to be of their feelings in their old age. It cannot be a source of sweet reflection to us, to say or do anything that will bring their grey hairs down with sorrow to the grave.

In your letter you ask my forgiveness, which I readily grant. But it seems to me, that you still retain an idea that I have given you reasons to be angry or disaffected with me. Grant me the privilege of saying then, that however hasty and harsh I may have spoken at any time to you, it has been done for the express purpose of endeavouring to warn, exhort, admonish, and rescue you from falling into difficulties and sorrows, which I foresaw you plunging into, by giving way to that wicked spirit, which you call your passions, which you should curb and break down, and put under your feet; which if you do not, you never can be saved, in my view, in the Kingdom of God. God requires the will of His creatures to be swallowed up in His will.

You desire to remain in the Church, but forsake your Apostleship. This is the stratagem of the evil one; when he has gained one advantage, he lays a plan for another. But by maintaining your Apostleship, in rising up and making one tremendous effort, you may overcome your passions, and please God. And by forsaking your Apostleship, is not to be willing to make that sacrifice that God requires at your hands, and is to incur His displeasure; and without pleasing God, we do not think it will be any better for you. When a man falls one step, he must regain that step again, or fall another; he has still more to gain, or eventually all is lost.

I desire, brother William, that you will humble yourself. I freely forgive you, and you know my unshaken and unchangeable disposition; I know in whom I trust; I stand upon the rock; the floods cannot, no, they shall not, overthrow me. You know the doctrine I teach is true, and you know that God has blessed me. I brought salva-

tion to my father's house, as an instrument, in the hand of God, when they were in a miserable situation. You know that it is my duty to admonish you, when you do wrong. This liberty I shall always take, and you shall have the same privilege. I take the liberty to admonish you, because of my birth-right; and I grant you the privilege, because it is my duty to be humble, and receive rebuke and instruction from a brother, or a friend.

As it regards what course you shall pursue hereafter, I do not pretend to say; I leave you in the hands of God and His Church. Make your own decision; I will do you good, although you mar me, or slay me. By so doing, my garments shall be clear of your sins. And if at any time you should consider me to be an impostor, for heaven's sake leave me in the hands of God, and not think to take vengeance on me yourself. Tyranny, usurpation, and to take men's rights, ever has [been] and ever shall be banished from my heart. David sought not to kill Saul, although he was guilty of crimes that never entered my heart.

And now may God have mercy upon my father's house; may God take away enmity from between me and thee; and may all blessings be restored, and the past be forgotten forever. May humble repentance bring us both to thee, O God, and to Thy power and protection, and a crown, to enjoy the society of father, mother, Alvin, Hyrum, Sophronia, Samuel, Catherine, Carlos, Lucy, the Saints, and all the sanctified in peace, for ever, is the prayer of your brother

JOSEPH SMITH, jun.

To William Smith.

Saturday morning, 19th. At home. Sent the above letter to brother William Smith. I have had many solemn feelings this day concerning my brother William, and have prayed in my heart fervently, that the Lord will not cast him off, but that he may return to the God of Jacob, and magnify his Apostleship and calling. May this be his happy lot, for the Lord of glory's sake. Amen.

(To be continued.)

VARIETIES.

NEW APPLICATION OF MESMERISM.—In a letter to the Archbishop of Dublin, on Miss Sellon's establishment, by the Rev. Mr. Cooksley, it is stated that one of the most remarkable, if not the most formidable, agents made use of, in subduing the understandings, and whole being of the "sisters" to the will of the "lady superior," is *mesmerism*. Miss Sellon has credit for singular skill in the mesmeric art.—*Glasgow Saturday Post*, July 9.